GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1439
ANSWERED ON:10.03.2008
TELEPHONE CONNECTIONS IN RURAL AREAS
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has drawn any comprehensive plan to create exhaustive network of telephone connectivity to rural areas in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by when large network of telephone cables will be laid across the rural areas of the country;

(c) whether the cellular and WLL Telephonic network which is being provided for the areas where the telephone network is not cable based and efficient to cater to the needs of subscribers; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to improve the quality of the services by both Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In order to create exhaustive network of telephone connectivity in the rural areas of the country following comprehensive plan has been drawn by the Government:-

(i) Provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in 66,822 uncovered villages under Bharat Nirman through subsidy support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).

(ii) Setting up of 7871 Sharable Infrastructure Sites in 500 districts for provision of mobile services in rural and remote areas through subsidy support from USOF (Phase-I).

(iii) Second Phase of the Mobile Infrastructure Scheme for setting up 11,049 additional tower to cover the remaining uncovered rural and remote areas of the country is likely to be launched shortly.

(iv) For creation of general infrastructure for development of telephone facilities, Government has proposed to improve the Optical Fibre Connectivity (OFC) network between the Block Headquarters and District Headquarters.

(v) Subsidy support through UAOF for Rural Direct Exchange Lines (RDEL).

(c) & (d) In order to improve the Quality of Service, both BSNL and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) have undertaken following steps:-

(A) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)

Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) Services:
i) Providing upto 3 WLL Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) per Short Distance Charging Area (SDCA) to improve the WLL coverage in SDCAs.
ii) 1S95 based Code Division Multiplex Access (CDMA) network are being upgraded/replaced by atleast CDMA 2000 1x WLL network.
iii) Many Value Added Services Like high speed Internet, SMS etc. are being provided to WLL customers.
iv) Conversion of SPM (Single Base Module) into RSUs (Remote Switching Units) and C.DOT 256 Port exchanges into AN-RAXs (Access Network-Rural Automatic Exchanges).

Mobile Services:
i) Expansion of Network: BSNL is in the process of expanding its GSM network to overcome the network congestion caused due to ever growing demand and traffic.
ii) Drive test: The exercise of Drive test for network optimization has been intensified to improve the Quality of Service (QoS).
iii) Load Balancing: The traffic load of Binary Synchronous Communications (BSCs) / BTSs is monitored and reparenting done

wherever required.
iv) Congestion relief mechanism: Network optimization by using congestion relief mechanism in the BTSs having un-equal traffic among three sectors is being carried out.
v) Monitoring of the network: Monitoring of network congestion is done and necessary corrective measures have been intensified.

(B) Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL)
(i) Improving the legacy Public Switching Telecom Network (PSTN) network by change of cables, drop wire etc. as required.

(ii) Nearly 300 Base Transceiver Station (BTS) each in Delhi/Mumbai is being installed.

(iii) Expansion of Cellular mobile network by 1 million each in Delhi and Mumbai in 2007-08.

(iv) Provision of a lot of value added services for both PSTN and mobile subscribers in line with emerging trends.

(v) Provision of WLL service to cater to the longer distances, congested areas etc.